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V.

THE CENSUS OF 1880.

THE period is approaching when, for the tenth time since the organization of the Government of the United States, the enumeration of the inhabitants required by the Federal Constitution to be made once in every ten years is again about to be entered upon. The constitutional purpose of the census was a very simple one, being merely to fix the apportionment of representatives and of direct taxes between the States. In the course of a century it has assumed a far greater importance, and, though heretofore much less comprehensive than would be desirable, it has come to embrace many of the most important facts which mark our material progress as a nation.

The ten years just closing have been marked by greater changes of material condition than any similar period since the beginning of our national history. The vast extension of the railway system and of telegraphy, the steady pushing forward of the frontiers of civilization to and beyond the Rocky Mountains, the discovery of new and rich deposits of the precious metals and the enlarging of the areas of all mining industry, the increase in the number of occupations and the greater development of established industries, would seem to demand of the approaching census an enlargement of the plans heretofore pursued, and a greater variety of details, than has characterized any of its predecessors. The census bill of 1870, which passed the House of Representatives, but failed to become a law, proposed to add very largely to the range of statistical inquiry. The fullest detailed information was required to be obtained respecting railways, canals, and river improvements, coast-wise and inland navigation, express companies, telegraphs, life, fire, and marine insurance, newspapers and periodicals, and State, municipal, and corporate debts. The failure of the bill left the census to be taken under the act of 1850, which, though it considerably

enlarged the scope of previous censuses, left it still much narrower than was proposed by the contemplated legislation. Up to 1850, nothing had been added to the population tables required by the Constitution, except some manufacturing schedules of an indeterminate character and of slight statistical value. These were first included in the census of 1810, continued in 1820, wholly omitted in 1830, renewed, but not materially added to, in 1840.

In his report, made to the Secretary of the Interior in January, 1870, General Walker, the experienced and very capable Superintendent of the Census, did not propose any increase in the number of schedules required by the act of 1850, but he made several valuable suggestions as to the obtaining of completer and more accurate information under the several schedules heretofore used.

These schedules were five in number, and related respectively to population, mortality, agriculture, industrial pursuits, and to social statistics, which included all that relates to churches, schools, libraries, newspapers, wealth, taxation, pauperism, crime, wages, etc. The slave schedule, which formed the sixth and last under the act of 1850, is now happily obsolete.

As we are writing, information comes to us that the more elaborate statistics required by the proposed law of 1870 have been grafted as an amendment on the original bill now passing through Congress, although opposed by General Garfield, the chairman of the committee on the ninth census, whose elaborate report, presented to the House of Representatives in January, 1870, is one of the most valuable of American state papers on the whole subject. The grounds of General Garfield's objection are stated to be that "he feared the schedules would be overloaded, and that the statistics on these subjects, gathered in the manner indicated, would be of little value."

We are now far behind most European countries in the completeness of our statistical annals, and the materials are wanting to any exhaustive study of our political and social economy. It matters little what theory of political economy or of sociology is entertained by the studious inquirers; exact facts, arranged for convenient comparison, are alike necessary to him. Whether political economy be a deductive science, resting on certain fundamental principles, as the English economists insist, or is, on the other hand, an inductive science, as is, with equal confidence, claimed by the new historical school of the Continent, the fullest statistical data are necessary to support it and give it practical value. The disciples

of Adam Smith and Ricardo invoke the evidence of facts to support their *a priori* propositions, and the disciples of Roscher require them even more, in order to show their modifying influence on laws and institutions at different periods, in different countries, and in different states of society.

But the importance of statistics and of statistical deductions has never been properly appreciated in this country. For this there are several reasons. Chief among them is the fact that we occupy a new country, and are, practically speaking, a new race. Our natural resources are so exuberant that we have hitherto been careless of those minute calculations and close economies to accomplish which statesmen in older and less favored countries are constantly interrogating the past. The average American feels very little interest in knowing the number of births and deaths, the rates of mortality in different places, the diseases which are most prevalent and most fatal, the average period of longevity, the occupations of the people, or the places of their birth. He does not see what uses this knowledge could be put to if he acquired it, and he is very apt to look upon the whole thing as so much rubbish. He is somewhat more alive to the importance of agricultural, manufacturing, and other industrial statistics, because some of the facts included in these fall within his experience, or touch his particular trade or occupation. So far as it goes, this desire for particular and partial information is good, and works toward the right end. If every man in his own calling were to demand of the Government full and exact information about matters which concerned him, the aggregate of those demands would create a public sentiment by which a very complete and progressive body of statistics would ultimately be created.

Considered in the light of their natural intelligence, average education, and reputed inquisitiveness, there is no people in the world so competent as the American people to communicate the facts which a census should include, and at the same time understand the practical uses to which statistical information can be put. But educational training in that direction is almost wholly wanting. In his annual report for 1872, the Secretary of the Interior recommended the publication of the excellent statistical atlas compiled under the direction of General Walker, and urged an appropriation for that purpose, "with a view to promote that higher kind of political education which has hitherto been so greatly neglected in this country, but toward which the attention of the general public,

as well as of institutions and students, is now being turned with the most lively interest. The exact knowledge of our country should be the basis of this education, and it is in the power of Congress, by authorizing such a publication as is here recommended, to practically inaugurate the study of political and social statistics in the colleges and higher schools of the land."

The importance of this class of studies has recently been presented with great ability by Mr. White, the President of Cornell University, in an address delivered on the 22d of February last before the trustees and alumni of the Johns Hopkins University, at Baltimore. The special subject of this address was "the proper provision for higher instruction in subjects bearing directly upon public affairs." Its opening proposition is that "the demand of this nation for men trained in history, political and social science, and general jurisprudence, can hardly be overstated."

It will be greatly to the honor of these two younger among American universities if they shall, in advance of more venerable and more distinguished institutions of learning, occupy this new field of instruction. Until studies of this character form a part of all higher education, it is in vain to expect that statistics will have their proper weight, either in legislative bodies or in common life. There is at present a lack of educators to instill a proper respect for statistical learning and to point out its practical uses. In most enlightened countries the two classes of men who best perform that office are statesmen and publicists. The conditions both of public and of private life in this country are not favorable to the creation of either of those classes. Public life is too short and too precarious to offer any inducements to a special preparation for it. It is an accident or an episode rather than a career. In England young men make choice of it as they would of any other profession, and begin at the universities to study public questions and to exercise themselves in public speaking. There is very little of this now to be found in American colleges—much less, we incline to believe, under the *régime* of the prevailing fashion of secret societies than when whole colleges were divided into two or three great debating clubs, such as existed at Yale College forty years ago. A young and clever man just out of college could hardly do anything more likely to defeat its object than to avow an intention of making political life a career.

The too frequent and regular recurrence of elections has much to do with the diversion of politics from its higher ends in the

United States. There is no rest either for the elector or the elected. The smoke of one party battle has hardly cleared away before another one begins. The member of Congress is always looking backward at his constituency, and his anxieties are deepened by the knowledge that there is but one constituency open to him. If he grows out of accord with its dominant sentiment, if its local interests seem to him to clash with higher national considerations, he has to make the painful choice between the sacrifice of his convictions or his place. Thus the constituency, the nominating convention, and the ever-impending election are to public men a constant nightmare, diverting them from the business of legislation, and, still more, from those habits of study and reflection which are so necessary to the maturing of statesmanlike opinions.

A very different state of things prevails in Great Britain, where the septennial act, the principle of responsible government, and the freedom to represent any constituency, without regard to the question of domicile, are the bulwarks of a Parliamentary career.

While the possible life of a Parliament is seven years, the period of its actual duration is determined by causes acting within its own body. Governments are carried on not by a bare majority, but by a largely predominating fraction of the House of Commons. Within the limits of such a majority there is room for independence and a measurable degree of dissent from the policy of the governing party taken as a whole. Without the recognized division into Right and Left and Right and Left Centers, which prevails in the French Assembly, the British House of Commons has its Liberal Conservatives and its Conservative Liberals—men who sit below the gangway on either side of its Parliamentary chamber.

The last published article of the lamented Walter Bagehot ("Fortnightly Review" for December, 1878) gives a clear definition of the place held by these intermediate bodies.

Holding its place by the ability of its administration to command the votes of its party within and the sympathy of the people outside of Parliament, an English Ministry is compelled to frame a policy and to legislate in harmony with it. Hence the presentation of Parliamentary business is not left to chance, nor to the caprices of individuals or committees, but is the constitutional duty of ministers as the chosen party leaders. It is to legislation matured under these conditions that a well-authenticated and digested body of statistics is especially necessary.

We can not have in this country the machinery nor the political

and social conditions which make the British Parliament what it is ; we can not substitute the system of Parliamentary government for what Mr. Bagehot calls the Presidential form. It is extremely doubtful whether we can even mix the two systems to any advantage, though this has sometimes been proposed. Of what use would it be to the House of Representatives to record a vote of want of confidence in a Cabinet not nominated by itself, but chosen by the nation through its choice of the President who appoints them, when such a vote would not lead to their resignation ? Being the personal advisers of the President, they must stay by him during his term of office, or the whole character of that office is changed. One feature of the English system might, however, as it seems to us, be safely and wisely ingrafted on our own ; that is, the giving to Cabinet officers seats without votes in the House of Representatives. It would promote a closer union between the legislative and executive branches of the Government, and it would give the heads of departments a much better opportunity to explain and defend measures than they now have through the clumsy medium of written annual reports. It would certainly add to the dignity as well as to the usefulness of Cabinet officers, who, at present, occupy a much less influential position than the members of the British Cabinet.

The things which are now lacking to an intelligent use of statistics by American statesmen are a more thorough educational training, greater permanence in public life, more power in the hands of party leaders to shape and control legislation, and a better civil service, by means of which the departmental offices might come gradually to be filled by persons of education and technical experience. In the hands of such persons the value of statistics, in the work of legislation, would very soon be recognized. The excellent recommendations of the Secretary of the Interior with regard to statistical education, already quoted, have as yet borne no important fruits. There are chairs of Political Economy (generally in connection with history) in most of our better colleges ; but none, so far as we are aware, of political science in the broader acceptation, as that science was presented by President White in his Baltimore address. The treatment of Political Economy is generally technical, and from one or other of the two partisan standpoints—protection or free trade. There is ground for hope that the recent publication of an American translation of Roscher, the founder of the Historical School in Germany, may open the way to a broader

consideration of Political Economy as one of the most important branches of human history.

The very conditions and shortcomings of our public life, as we have indicated them, make it the more necessary that there should be greater attention paid to political studies in our systems of higher education. We can not depend, as in England, upon the services of a Parliamentary class, and must therefore endeavor to make more general and popular the study of those subjects which lie at the bottom of a statesman's education; there is no reason why they should not form a part of the elective studies running through a considerable portion of a college course. If this were the case, a body of competent teachers would soon spring up, such as are to be found at all the great universities of Continental Europe, and the word publicist would become a recognized one in our national vocabulary.

The importance of statistical studies was lately very well presented in an address of Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, a leading member of the British Parliament, on assuming the presidency of the Statistical Society of London. That Society was formed on the 15th of March, 1834, and was an outgrowth of the statistical section of the British Association. Among its founders were Charles Babbage, inventor of the calculating machine, and Henry Hallam, the historian. The true founder, however, of statistical science was Adolphe Quetelet, a Belgian Professor of Mathematics in his native city of Ghent. "By a masterly application of the inductive system to moral and social problems, he educed, from a vast collection of isolated facts, generalizations which amazed the world of his day to the full as much as the conclusions of physical philosophers had startled and terrified preceding generations." The Royal Academy of Belgium owes its existence, in its present form, chiefly to the influence of Quetelet; and from him, also, the British Association borrowed the germs of what is now the London Statistical Society.

Mr. Shaw-Lefevre, in the address referred to, stated the objects of that Association to be, "the study of the conditions and prospects of society. The state or condition of society is the simultaneous state of all the greater social facts or phenomena; and the progress of society is the succession of those facts or phenomena considered in relation to one another. . . . In the life or progress of a country like ours, with its vast empire, its extended interests, and its endless points of contact with other countries, there must be a continuous succession of subjects of vital interest to the community, pressing

upon the heels of one another, and requiring the investigation of impartial thinkers, statisticians, philosophers, and experts, before they are ripe for practical dealing by statesmen in Parliament, or before they can be understood in all their bearings by the public."

It is much to be regretted that there are so few similar associations in this country. Most European countries have them, and they are there regarded as indispensable auxiliaries to public statistical work. Except the American Social Science Association, we have no corresponding body in the United States. That society is doing good and improving work; and, if some provision can be made for the wider distribution of the papers read before it, a decided progress in several departments of sociology may be expected to show itself in all parts of this country.

The study of comparative statistics is one of the secondary and higher growths resulting from the cultivation of statistical science. The English race has not been hitherto remarkable for a patient and exhaustive study of foreign statistics. Exception ought, however, to be made in favor of the reports sent to the British Foreign Office by its diplomatic and consular agents in other countries on subjects affecting British industry and commerce. But scholars and publicists in England have not, for the love of science only, nor out of respect for what foreign nations are capable of teaching Great Britain, pushed their researches into the material history of those nations. On the Continent, however, both Governments and individuals have been at great pains to bring important foreign statistics to the attention of their own people. Some recent instances of this may be mentioned. The "*Documents Monétaires*," published by the Belgian Government, under the late ministry of M. Malou, is a collection containing the text of all the important legislation and of leading reports and state papers on monetary subjects which have appeared in Europe or America since 1865.* The Italian Government has also published a valuable series of reports illustrative of the banking and forced paper-money systems of the United States, France, Russia, and Austria, under the title of "*Notizie intorno all' Ordinamento Bancario, e al Corso Forzato, negli Stati Uniti di America, in Russia, nell' Impero Austro-Ungarico e in Francia.*" Baron Karl von Hock, of Austria, published, more than ten years ago, the most compact and intelligible account

* In this connection we ought not to omit to give credit to the British Government for the valuable statistical information contained in the appendices to Mr. Goschen's "*Silver Report*" of 1876.

of the financial system of France ever written, and still more recently an exhaustive treatise on the finances of the United States during the civil war.

Maurice Block and M. A. Legoyt, in France, have made invaluable contributions to statistical science; the former by his "*L'Europe Politique et Sociale*," published in 1869, and the latter by his "*Forces Matérielles de l'Empire d'Allemagne*," published in 1877.

It will be a long time, we fear, before American scholars will add anything to statistical history of a kindred nature.

The census bill now before Congress, and which will doubtless be a law before this article goes to press, enlarges the constitutional scope of the census by making it apply to the "wealth and industry" of the United States, as well as to its population. It henceforth takes its place as a statistical inquiry of the broadest character. With the proposed new schedules of 1870 added, of which we have already given the particulars, there would seem to be scarcely anything wanting to its completeness. In view of this enlargement of its scope, certain changes in the method of obtaining information became absolutely necessary. Hitherto the enumeration has been made by United States marshals, men holding their offices by political appointment and directly attached to the Federal courts. The only possible ground for selecting them has been, that they are the least objectionable Federal officers for the work, who live in the several States and Territories where the census is to be taken. Neither judges nor custom-house officials nor postmasters would have answered the purpose as well. So long as the single fact of the number of people residing in a State or district was to be ascertained, United States marshals and their deputies were competent enough for the task, but they were as a class not at all competent to prosecute the higher branches of a statistical inquiry.

Under the new law, the Secretary of the Interior is to appoint one or more supervisors of census for each State or Territory, the whole number not to exceed one hundred and fifty. The supervisors are to recommend to the Superintendent of Census a subdivision of the territory assigned to them, into suitable districts, and an enumerator for each district. Such enumerators must have the approval of the Superintendent, and be chosen for their fitness, and without reference to party affiliations.

The Superintendent is not, however, obliged to employ the official enumerators for the whole work; but may, at his discretion, use the mortality statistics to be obtained from city registrations,

where such registrations are kept. He may, in like manner, entirely withdraw from the enumerators the manufacturing and social schedules, and charge the collection of these statistics upon experts and special agents, to be employed without reference to locality. He may also employ similar experts and agents to investigate, in their economic relations, the manufacturing, railway, fishing, mining, and other industries of the country, and to gather the statistics relating to telegraph, express, transportation, and insurance companies ; framing, in all cases, such additional schedules as he may think desirable.

With this wide discretion, it will be in the power of an experienced Superintendent to make the tenth census a far more complete and valuable document than any of its predecessors.

Provision is made in the law for utilizing and harmonizing with the Federal system the intermediate censuses now taken by many of the States, the Federal Government agreeing to pay half the cost of such censuses if taken in conformity with that law.

An important question, which has been considered in connection with the new census, was the practicability and expediency of taking the enumeration of the people in a single day, as is done in England. General Walker discussed this question at some length in his report made to the Secretary of the Interior in January, 1878, and advised against it on the ground of expense. It is agreed, on all hands, that an instantaneous enumeration is highly desirable, so as to photograph, as it were, the population of a country exactly as it stands at a given moment. The census law of 1850 made no attempt to do this, but permitted the work to be protracted over a period of one hundred days, from June 1st to September 10th. The new law is a great improvement, in that it requires the enumeration to be completed within two weeks from the first day of June in all places of ten thousand inhabitants or over, and on or before the first day of July in all other places.

The results of the tenth census will be looked for with great interest, not only by the people of the United States, but in all other civilized countries. This country occupies a far higher rank in the family of nations than it occupied in 1870. The Centennial Exhibition first opened the eyes of Europe to the astonishing progress of our first political century, and won for us a respectful consideration such as was never before entertained. Our successful victory over domestic rebellion, and our not less signal financial victory over forced paper-money, rank among the highest political

and moral achievements in national history. A career of great material prosperity is evidently opening before us, which contrasts strongly with the arrest, if not the decadence, of commerce and industry which seems to threaten the British Islands. It is highly probable that the coming decade will witness a larger immigration from Europe than has ever before taken place in the same period. The present state both of Great Britain and Germany invites it. With the vast accumulated wealth at its command we do not suppose that the present industrial prostration of the former country will long continue to be as severe as now. The conditions of production will readjust themselves; raw materials, food, and wages will decline, and merchandise will be produced at lower cost, and the fierce competition for the possession of foreign markets will be renewed. But it will be under conditions far more onerous to the laborer, and he will, in many instances, expatriate himself rather than submit to them. So, too, in Germany, the Socialistic element will emigrate rather than bear the ever-increasing repression which a government ruled over by Prince Bismarck will subject it to. His new protective policy may or may not bring measurable relief to the working classes. Opinions differ widely on that point; but, when the people of a great empire has become so strongly inoculated with social and political ideas at variance with those of their rulers, there must either be revolution or a large expatriation of the dissatisfied element, before matters will be accommodated. From both of those countries, therefore, we may expect the influx of a substantial and serviceable population.

The population of the United States in 1870 was 38,558,000. What may it be expected to be in 1880? The rate of decennial increase, from the formation of the Government down to 1870, was remarkably uniform. From 1790 to 1800, it was 35 per cent.; from 1800 to 1810, $36\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; from 1810 to 1820, 33 per cent.; from 1820 to 1830, $33\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; from 1830 to 1840, $32\frac{3}{4}$ per cent.; from 1840 to 1850, nearly 36 per cent.; from 1850 to 1860, $35\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; and from 1860 to 1870, only $22\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. There was in that decade very little immigration, and a large destruction of lives through the civil war. If the increase from 1870 to 1880 should be only 25 per cent. we shall show a population of more than 48,000,000. Professor Elliott, of the Statistical Bureau, estimates it at 50,858,000. As countries grow older, the rate of increase lessens: thus, in Great Britain, it was 10 per cent. between 1790 and 1800; 17 per cent. between 1810 and 1820; and only $7\frac{7}{10}$ per cent. between

1860 and 1870. It is hardly probable that in the United States the former ratios of increase will be maintained. Enough that we are already by far the most numerous people speaking one language on the face of the globe. Russia alone of European states now goes before us in population, having, exclusive of her Asiatic territory, about 75,000,000 people. Before the century ends, we shall doubtless exceed that number.

It must be remembered that of our vast territory of more than three million square miles, only a fourth part is to any great extent in a state of cultivation. The center of population is moving steadily westward. In 1800 it was on the meridian of Washington; in 1840, of Pittsburg; in 1870, of Cincinnati. In 1880, it may be expected to reach Indianapolis; and, by the end of the century, the Mississippi River, originally the western boundary of our national domain, may have become the central point of our extended empire.

Few Americans realize the enormous changes which that empire has undergone since the adoption of the Federal Constitution. Prior to the Louisiana purchase in 1803, our territory was bounded by the Mississippi River on the west and the Spanish possession of Florida on the south. The cession of Louisiana gave us all west of the Mississippi and north of the Red River and of Mexico to the Pacific Ocean, a territory considerably exceeding the previous Union. The annexation of Texas in 1845, and the Texas cession of 1850, added a domain nearly equal to the States north of the line of the Ohio and east of the Mississippi; and the first and second Mexican cessions of 1848 and 1852 completed the line of our "scientific frontier" by giving us a territory about as large as the States south of the Great Lakes and east of the Mississippi. The United States of 1800 was therefore a country only a third as large as the United States of to-day.

The census of 1880 will tell us how this empire is peopled, and will add all the material facts necessary to a knowledge of its productions and its resources. It will remain for statesmen and publicists to instruct the people how these resources may be used to the highest national advantage.

GEORGE WALKER.